

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 87

By Williams

A RESOLUTION to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the passage of the Smith-Hughes Act.

WHEREAS, on February 23, 1917, Congress passed the National Vocational Education Act, sponsored by Senator Hoke Smith and Representative Dudley M. Hughes, both of Georgia. This legislation was soon recognized and popularly known as the Smith-Hughes Act; and

WHEREAS, the Smith-Hughes Act was designed to: "appropriate [money]...to respective states...for the purpose of paying the salaries [and preparation] of teachers, supervisors, and directors of agricultural subjects...trade, home economics, and industrial subjects"; and

WHEREAS, the Smith-Hughes Act was the first law that authorized federal government oversight of a portion of high school curriculum by creating a federal Board of Vocational Education that established and oversaw the operation of vocational education; and

WHEREAS, states were required to submit plans for vocational programs to be offered, and teachers had to be trained in specific vocational areas. Funding was provided to states for teacher training and provided at minimum one-half of vocational teacher salaries. Vocational education was targeted for students over the age of fourteen for employment preparation; and

WHEREAS, initially all matching funds in Tennessee were provided by local school systems until the General Assembly met and set up a financial program in 1919; and

WHEREAS, the Henry County Board of Education met the requirements to qualify its agricultural program for funding under provisions of the new Smith-Hughes Act in March 1917, the first school system in Tennessee to do so; and

WHEREAS, other schools to have programs in 1917 were Bradley County, Davidson County Central, Farragut, McLemoresville, Bruce (Dyersburg), Fayette County Training

Academy, Haywood County Training School, Lauderdale County Training School, Orchard-Knob (Chattanooga), Shelby County Training School, and Wilson County Training School; and

WHEREAS, N. E. Fitzgerald, a member of the agriculture education staff at the University of Tennessee, served as the first state administrator of the Smith-Hughes program on an interim basis from 1917 until 1919. In 1919, the Tennessee Board of Education selected Dudley Clements to be the first permanent state supervisor of agriculture education; and

WHEREAS, he served in this position until 1936, when he resigned to join the federal agent for agriculture education in the southern states and Puerto Rico for the U.S. Office of Education. At the time of his death in 1950, Mr. Clements was the assistant chief of agriculture education in Washington, D.C.; and

WHEREAS, Dudley M. Clements began teaching agriculture courses at Robert B. Jones High School in Lynnville in 1911. In 1915, he transferred to E. W. Grove High School in Paris, where he served as principal and taught agriculture courses; and

WHEREAS, in 1927, Mr. Clements was instrumental in forming the Future Farmers of Tennessee, which affiliated with the Future Farmers of America (FFA) when it was formed in 1928; and

WHEREAS, under Mr. Clements's leadership, the Future Farmers of Tennessee acquired twenty-five acres of land on the Caney Fork River in Van Buren County in 1928 in order to build the nation's first camp owned by FFA. The camp opened in 1931, and in 1934 delegates at the State FFA Convention officially named their camp for the man who inspired its development; and

WHEREAS, the FFA Camp is still in operation today, hosting thousands each year for FFA camps, retreats, meetings, and special events, as well as other career and technical student organizations from time to time; and

WHEREAS, in 2016, State Historian Dr. Carroll Van West directed the publication of *Tennessee FFA: Tradition and Transformation*, which tells the story of the beginnings of agriculture education and FFA in the Volunteer State; and

WHEREAS, today, more than 14,000 Tennessee students are actively involved in FFA in some 200 public high schools; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee FFA Association is currently led by eight student officers: President Mackenzie Clark, Scotts Hill FFA; East Tennessee Vice President Ally Clark, Meigs County FFA; Middle Tennessee Vice President Aaron Walls, Cookeville FFA; West Tennessee Vice President Sam Daniel, Covington FFA; Secretary Hannah Nave, Woodbury FFA; Treasurer Abby Gass, Blackman FFA; Reporter Taylor Curtis, McEwen FFA; and Sentinel Allison Parker, Station Camp FFA; and

WHEREAS, these dedicated young leaders of today and tomorrow are exemplary of the FFA mission and motto: "Learning to Do, Doing to Learn, Earning to Live, Living to Serve"; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we recognize and commemorate the 100th anniversary of the passage of the Smith-Hughes Act to establish agriculture education in public schools.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we welcome the FFA state officers to Capitol Hill.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.